



February 2024 Grace Lutheran Church

# Congregation Welcomes Pastor Rosy



## Installation January 28

Above, Pastor Rosy is surrounded by fellow clergy, from left Pastor Stephen Friedrich, Pastor Bob Miller, Pastor Judy Bullock, and Rev. Rick Ohsiek, who presided over the event.

Photos by Stan Long

More photos on Pages 10-11.



# JOYFUL NOISE

BY SLADE TRAMMELL



## February Music to Celebrate Black Composer

As soon as the weather permits, all of our music teams will be back to work making joyful noises—hopefully well before the time you will be reading this!

With the arrival of February, we will celebrate Black History Month by featuring music by the brilliant composer Samuel Coleridge-Taylor. The choral, orchestral, solo, and chamber music he left behind are astonishing in their versatility. Coleridge-Taylor’s anthem, “O Ye That Love the Lord,” will be heard at the 11:15 service on February 18. The luminous and reverent qualities of the work make it the perfect vehicle to commemorate the first Sunday in Lent.

Please stay warm and join us!

## Art Show Winners Named

In addition to the Rummage/Bake Sale on Saturday, October 14, 2023, we had the usual great Art Show from the 3rd graders at Woodland School who are students of Mary Katherine Chinn. There were 86 entries based on the theme of a "Corgi Tea Party". The art show was on display in the Fellowship Hall from October 14 through the end of October. Voting took place during that time.



The winners are:

1st place is #46,  
painted by Juniper Hyde

2nd place is #69  
by Jerra Pettit



### **BOTH SERVICES ARE NOW IN THE SANCTUARY**

9:00 a.m. Contemporary: In Person, Sanctuary

11:15 a.m. Traditional: In-Person, Sanctuary

Services on YouTube: [https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCHKKSX\\_JwSTrvl-LqdrbGlw](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCHKKSX_JwSTrvl-LqdrbGlw)

**Pastor Rosalina (Rosy) Rivera**

## God's 'Love is Chesed, a Steadfast Love'

<sup>1</sup>Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions. <sup>2</sup>Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. Psalm 51:1-2



I believe for most of us there are very few things in life that we “love” for an extended point of time (with the exception of family). It seems we become so complacent in our lives that we either stop “loving” something or another thing replaces that “love”. I remember for a very long time as a teen being infatuated with Elvis Presley. I loved his movies, his music, his dance moves and I even had a very extensive playing card collection that had various photos of him throughout his career. When I left for college, I stored all those cards in a box hoping they may one day be worth something. I came home from college one summer and found out my mom had sold them in a garage sale. I was devastated! But upon writing this article, I checked eBay and found one pack is now worth approximately \$10. In the end, I guess I didn't lose much.

When we talk about things we love, there is little that can be compared to the “steadfast love” written about in this Psalm. In Hebrew, as with all the ancient Semitic languages, many words have different shades of meanings which would be impossible to translate to English. How beautiful it would be if we were able to share the chesed love spoken in this text to our neighbors. One of the many meanings of this word implies an “unquenchable fire”. A burning love that dwells deep within and literally transforms us from the inside out. What if we were to carry that type of love into every relationship we had? How different would our world be?

Even if you were to read every translation you can find (they are on the internet) you still have not even begun to understand chesed. I like the English Standard Version (ESV) rendering of steadfast love. Perhaps you like the King James Version (KJV) which is defined as mercy, or maybe you like loyal love from the New English Translation (NET); they are all good renderings for chesed. But if you want one definition of chesed that embodies all of this, let me suggest a paraphrase from Mister Rogers, God loves us just the way we are. Yes, even in the broken, ugly, sinful mess that we make out of our lives, He still loves us. He doesn't want us to clean up our act, He wants to do it for us.

We are called and asked to repent. We do not need to do it to win God's love. He loves us just the way we are. But we repent because it is our way to show God that we love Him in return. There is the story in the Talmud (the Jewish Bible) of a king who loved his son dearly and gave him everything he wanted. But the son became disobedient. The king went to a servant and instructed him that if his son needed anything he was to withhold nothing. The servant asked, “Why give him anything if he is disobedient?” The King replied, “I love my son, I do not desire that he be in want. But because he is disobedient I cannot look upon him, so you must give to him.”

How fitting it is that the day we, within our culture, celebrate love the most, Valentine's Day, is the day in which we will begin the season of Lent this year. This Lent it is my hope that we are reminded that God does not stop loving us when we sin; his love is chesed, a steadfast love. He sent His Son to die on a cross to tear down that wall that keeps us from experiencing the love of God. By the work of the Holy Spirit, Christ enters our hearts so that we can then return that love. Only through the finished work of Jesus Christ can our sins be removed so we are free to love God. If God's love is chesed steadfast, then all we need to do is be a willing vessel so the Holy Spirit can change us through the cleansing blood of Jesus.

God continues to love us all despite our broken, messy lives. He continues to meet us every morning with a new day and a love that cannot and will not fail. As a Christian, the joy that we have should come from both His Spirit within us and as the result of His love toward us. And this joy is always worth, as Elvis would say, getting “All Shook Up!” Thanks be to God!

Always a servant of Christ,  
Pastor Rosy

# SAVE THE DATE! April 18-21, 2024

Would you like to experience an amazing weekend of God's wonderful Grace?

Have an opportunity to be fully immersed in His love? Laugh, sing and fellowship with other Christians?

Then the upcoming Via de Cristo weekend is the place for you!

For more info contact Janet or Rick Rawl, Crista Froeling, Lorraine Huynh, Valerie Hansen, Stacey Garrick, Slade Trammel or Betty Anne Domm. More details will be provided closer to the weekend.

**NEWS FROM THE FOOD PANTRY – Because of the snow & freezing ice, the Food Pantry was only open three Fridays in January. The pantry served 120 families. Those families consisted of 296 individuals with 98 being under 17, 87 being over 60, & 111 in ages 18 to 59.**

## February Birthdays

Pam Woodard	02/03
Vickie Kitts	02/05
Emilie Damos	02/06
Connor Riley	02/09
Ge (Jake) Moua	02/12
Evan Weber	02/13
Ruth Smiley	02/13
Valerie Hansen	02/14
Terry Domm	02/14
David Bafford	02/18
Gabriel Weber	02/20

*If you have a name you would like to add to the birthday list or a correction, please call the church office at 483-3787.*

**Sharing Abundance Stories:** As part of the emphasis on sharing abundance, the Stewarding Commission continues to look for stories about how God has provided abundance in your life, especially in the context of the ministries of Grace Lutheran Church. Stories can be brief, a paragraph or two in length. Some suggestions for stories are:

- Write about a personal experience in which an opportunity to share abundance presented itself.
- Write about an observation of sharing abundance by another person or group of persons.
- Write about a discovery of ways to share abundance personally or as part of a group. Describe an opportunity for sharing abundance.



**Pastor Rosy is still doing home visits and house blessings . Sign up here: [Pastor's Page – Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church – Oak Ridge, TN \(graceoakridge.org\)](https://www.graceoakridge.org).**

## The President's Corner by Valerie Hansen

### Council Sets Dates, Asks for Volunteers to Synod



I hope everyone survived the snow without too much damage. I always enjoy how snow makes everything quiet and at night, it just seems brighter with the moon reflecting off the snow. I am aware of a few unpleasant incidences and hope by now things are on their way back to 'normal.'

The Council did meet as scheduled on January 15, except via Zoom instead of in-person.

Highlights from the January Council meeting include:

- Annual Reports should be submitted by now.
- January Congregational meeting that was scheduled for January 21 at 1 p.m. is now postponed to February 4 at 12:45 p.m.
- Pastor Rosy's installation was held January 28.
- Ron Goans, chair of the Budget Task Force, presented the 2024 budget for Council's approval. Spoiler alert, revenue is way down.
- The call committee of Donna Hoglund,

Rick Rawl, Terry Domm, Nancy Munro, Heidi Peterson and Robert Stewart will serve as the Mutual Ministry Committee for Pastor Rosy during her first year. Any praises or concerns can be brought to them.

- Council retreat is scheduled for February 10.
- We need two delegates, preferably by the end of March, to attend the Southeastern Synod Assembly from May 31 to June 2, in Columbus, Georgia. Byran Stevenson, founder of the Equal Justice Initiative will be a guest speaker. I've heard he is fantastic! Synod will post more details in February. If you are interested in attending, please contact Pastor Rosy or me.

*Above all, maintain constant love for one another, for love covers a multitude of sins. Peter 4:8*

P.S. On a personal note, I want to thank everyone for the many, many prayers, hugs, cards, meals, calls, and kindness during the losses of my father, Arnold and my brother, Richard. Thank you to the Stephen's Ministry team for providing me with booklets on how to navigate the process of grief. I am so grateful to be part of such a loving community.

## **SEMI-ANNUAL MEETING Moved to Feb. 4**

The semi-annual congregational meeting will be held in person on Sunday, February 4, 2024, immediately after the 11:15 service at 12:45 p.m.

## Help Needed to Distribute Easter Food Baskets

Easter Food Baskets will be distributed to 26 families on Saturday, March 24, 2024. Volunteers are needed to help unload non-perishable food at the church on Wednesday afternoon, March 20 after 3-3:30 pm; fill baskets on Thursday and Friday; and on Saturday morning, March 23 from 8:30 am to 12:00 pm to unload perishable food, fill baskets and place the baskets in families' vehicles. If you have any questions or would like to help, contact Phil Stumbo at (865) 482-3048 or [pstumbo@comcast.net](mailto:pstumbo@comcast.net). Reminder, the February Love Offering goes to support the Easter Food Baskets.



## Feb. Love Offering – Easter Baskets

**GET READY FOR SOUPER BOWL SUNDAY** - The Serving Commission is sponsoring Souper Bowl Sunday on February 11. Those of you cheering for the AFC team (Kansas City) are asked to bring Chicken Noodle Soup and those cheering for the NFC team (San Francisco) are asked to bring Tomato Soup. You can bring the soup starting February 4.

There will be places marked on the tables in the Narthex on which to put your soup. Let's see which team wins the souper bowl. The big winner will be the Food Pantry. The cans will be counted sometime after the service on February 11 and the winner will be announced on February 18.



## Coffee, Tea, and Candy For Sale

**DON'T FORGET** we sell coffee, tea and chocolate. A portion of all proceeds from LWR Fair Trade products sold at Grace goes to the LWR's Small Farmer Fund. These items are located in the church entranceway.

# February Happenings

**Sunday School (Christian Education) for children and youth** meet at 10:00 a.m. in Jacob's Ladder room. If you have any questions about youth Christian Education, please contact Donna Gurecki (865-599-1238).

**The adult Sunday School class** meets in Room 101 at 10 a.m. every Sunday. Everyone is welcome.

**Is there interest in a CPR class??** Please let Donna Gurecki know if you would be interested in a class.

**The prayer shawls** are now located in the Narthex credenza.

**Help for Lutherans in Ukraine:** Lutheran Disaster Response: Eastern Europe Crisis Response (ELCA.org/ disaster). The ELCA is sending aide to our sister Lutheran churches in Ukraine and several neighboring countries. You can help!

**Blanket Workshop:** makes blankets for distribution to Lutheran World Relief. Meetings are on the first, third, and fifth Thursdays of the month from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Everyone is welcome to join in, or just stop by to see what is happening. Sewing skills are not required.

**Grace Photography Club:** The club will not meet again until March 16. Let Stan Long (865-356-2871, Longse@aol.com) know if you're interested in participating in this group.

**Grace Writers** is on hiatus until March 4, when in-person meetings will resume. **Poetry Pie**, which meets on Zoom will meet February 26.

**2024 Flower Calendar**— There are plenty of spaces on the 2024 flower calendar in the back hallway. Sign up today. You may sign up for a Sunday to provide flowers in honor or memory of someone, or to celebrate a special event. The member donation of \$25 provides flowers for both the contemporary service and the traditional service.

**We are in need of people to assist with Altar Guild** set up for the 11:15 service in February.

Our **Praise band** rehearses every Sunday morning at 8:00am before the Contemporary worship. We would love to add a guitar or bass player. Please contact our Director of Music, Slade Trammel, if you know of someone who may be interested.

**OLSE at Grace**—Other Languages for Speakers of English is an outgrowth of our ESOL program. Russian meets Fridays at 10:00 a.m., on Zoom. Contact Nancy Munro (nbmunro318@icloud.com) if you would like an invitation to the Russian class. Spanish class is on hold until we find a new teacher.

**The luncheon to discuss and work on changes to the contemporary worship service has been moved to Sat. Feb. 3 at 11 am in the fellowship hall.** Those who are involved with the contemporary worship are asked to attend but all are welcome. If you have any questions,

## Prayer Opportunities

**Prayer Chain Coordinator:** If you have a prayer chain request or would like to be added to the list of those who provide prayer, please email or text Donna Gurecki (865-599-1238, dlgurecki60@gmail.com).

**Prayer meeting is on Friday afternoons at around 5:00 p.m. for 30-60 minutes, wherever we are. We are gathering prayer requests from our group as the week unfolds, with praises and petitions being texted to Paul Gurecki (865-566-6807). All members of the group are on a group text, so everyone sees the prayer requests. If you are interested in joining our group, text Paul to get on the list. Please note: all prayer concerns need to be handled with strict confidentiality. Also, please be aware that being in this group should be a weekly commitment, not a casual option. "Lord, teach us to pray."**



With the beauty of our holiday sanctuary behind her, Pastor Rosy sings the “Song of Mary and Joseph” during the 9 p.m. Christmas Eve service. Below, Ringspiration played “Infant Holy, Infant Lowly” and “Carol of the Bells.” Bottom photo shows Chancel Choir, who sang “Rise Up, Shepherd, Go Tell it,” during the Prelude. If you were unable to attend the Christmas Eve event in person you can access the entire program online via Grace’s website.



**Christmas Eve  
Candlelight  
Service  
9 p.m.**





## Special Christmas Music

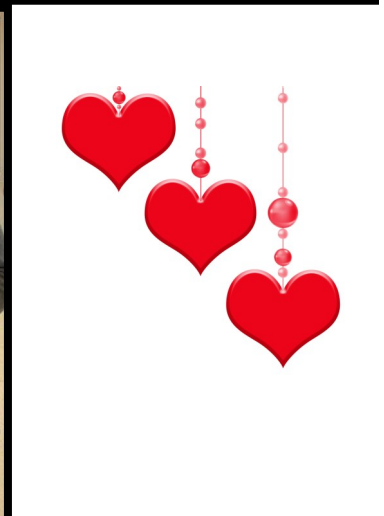
Dan Joy on Viola (above), and David Joy, Piano (not pictured) played "O Holy Night," during the 4 p.m. Family Service as well as the Christmas Eve Candlelight Service. At left, Paul Gurecki and Barbie Schmitt (right) also took part in the service, along with Barbara Sparks, Ringspiration, Chancel Choir and Pastor Rosy (pictured on Page 8).







Pastor Rosy  
Installation  
and reception  
photos on  
Pages 10 and  
11 by  
Pat Hope.



## Worshipping Offers February Workshops on Ashes/Anointing

Judy Goans, Worshipping

Beginning in February, the Worshipping Commission will offer a series of workshops that I hope you will find interesting. Our February workshops will focus on ashes and anointing.

### Making Ashes for Ash Wednesday

Did you ever wonder where the church gets the ashes that are placed on our foreheads on Ash Wednesday? They can be purchased, but the traditional way is to make them by burning palms left over from last Palm Sunday. We will meet on **Saturday, February 10, at 2:30 p.m.**, to burn palms and turn them into ashes. We will assemble in the church parking lot at the back entrance and move inside as needed. We will have a brief liturgy as we burn the palms, after which we will grind them and make them suitable for use. In case you are giving up chocolate for Lent, we will serve hot cocoa to warm up and get our chocolate fix.

If you have never made the ashes for Ash Wednesday before, I think you will enjoy the experience. Dress for the weather, get in touch with your inner firebug, and – a word to the wise – *since we will be dealing with ashes, wear something dark!*

### Healing Prayers and Anointing

Healing prayers and anointing are not only an act of kindness but a deeply spiritual experience, both for the person who prays and the one for whom prayers are offered. James, thought to be the brother of Jesus, told us, “Therefore confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another, so that you may be healed. The prayer of the righteous is powerful and effective.” (James 5:16)

We will be holding healing prayers and anointing those who wish to participate on third Sundays, at both services, beginning in February. To support this ministry, Worshipping will hold a short workshop for those who would like to know more. We will assemble in the sanctuary on **Saturday, February 24, at 10:00 a.m.** We will have sample prayers and anointing oil available and an opportunity to practice.

## Beyond the Call Award

Kathy Olsen received The Robert Meacham Beyond the Call Award recently from CONTACT Care Line. The man presenting is Bruce Marshall, Executive Director of CONTACT. The award was presented at the 50th anniversary celebration. Kathy said she received the award for scheduling new CONTACT trainees to work with seasoned phone workers.

“UT students were able to get a college credit if they completed classroom CONTACT training and completed an apprenticeship on the phone lines. The apprenticeship included observations of a seasoned worker taking calls and later taking the calls while being observed and evaluated. Students have a busy schedule and some acting phone workers preferred not to work with an apprentice. So, my contribution was to coordinate student availability with CONTACT worker availability.”



## Proclaiming Commission Activities Abound

Proclaiming Commission has been busy beavers of late. In addition to making name tags available and providing Coffee Fellowship, we created invitations to our Christmas Eve and related services for the holiday food baskets, Food Pantry patrons, and ESOL students. Pat Hope did press releases for the Christmas Eve services and more recently for Pastor Rosy's call and installation service. We met with Pastor Rosy to review some of our activities and she provided suggestions including that we consider joining the Chamber of Commerce to take advantage of greatly increasing the reach of our publicity as most of the larger churches do. We will soon give a try at using Signup Genius to add to the roster of greeters for the 11:15 a.m. service. Please watch for that opportunity to sign up. All volunteers who are involved with these activities are greatly appreciated!

## Name Tags Hospitality

Thank you for helping welcome Pastor Rosy by wearing name tags! Proclaiming has added a supply of lanyards for those who need them. We appreciate your putting the nametags back on the table in the narthex after worship services. A number of members have commented that these help them get to know other members whose names they are a little shaky on. Thus nametags show hospitality to our members, visitors and newer folks, not just Pastor Rosy!

## Coffee Fellowship: Greening Up

You can support Grace's efforts to be green by choosing to use a Grace mug! Please wash it at the coffee closet sink and dry it—dishwashing liquid and a brush and dish towel are available to you there. Thank you!

## Sparks Name Left Out of Light

This is a correction to January's list of people providing accompaniment to the Lessons and Carols service on December 31—Barbara Sparks was one of the 3 people providing special accompaniment on the December 31st Lessons and Carols, along with Barbie Schmitt and Susan Gunning. Barbara's name was inadvertently omitted from the January *Light*.

## Reminder: Minimize Fragrances

It is estimated that at least 15% of the population has fragrance sensitivities resulting in migraines, breathing problems, nausea, or other unpleasant health effects. Grace has some folks with these problems and we never know when a visitor may also. For the sake of our members and for hospitality to visitors, Grace has a policy of asking all not to wear perfumes or other fragrances to worship or other activities. Thank you!

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## Condolences

**Arnold Hansen — January 1**  
*Valerie Hansen's Father*

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**Want to win a gift card?**

**Find the three hearts.**

**NOTE: We are continuing this game for a few more months (to use existing gift**

**cards).**

February makes us think of hearts and love. See if you can find the three hearts in this issue.

Please send the page numbers where you find them to Pat Hope ([thetwohopes@aol.com](mailto:thetwohopes@aol.com)) by Feb. 29. Only email or

text messages (865-310-0722) accepted. Prize to be awarded in March.

**The one pictured here doesn't count.**

The three Snowmen in Jan. were on Pages 10, 14, and 18.

**Congratulations to past winners:**

Crista Froeling — January Snowmen

Susan Gunning — Dec. Poinsettias

Anne Douglas — Nov. Fall Leaves

Bethany Lemons — October Pumpkins

Betty Anne Domm — Sept. Coffee Cups

Pastor Paula — August Hot Dogs

**NO CONTEST IN JULY**

Anne Douglas — June Caps

Rhonda Ashburn — May Hearts